

the rest of Hellas for the gruff laconism of
 the Spartans,
 expressed in endless anecdotes like the tale of
 their answer
 to Philip of Macedon. For when that King
 wrote threaten-
 ing that if once he came within the marches
 of Laconia,
 he would leave them not one stone standing
 upon another,
 they wrote in reply the one word: If.' But
 throughout
 the rest of Greece only philosophers could
 aspire to this
 laconic standard; Plutarch, for instance,
 records with what
 we feel to be excessive edification, the retort
 of Zeno at
 a dinner given in Athens to the ambassadors
 of Persia.
 There the Founder of Stoicism, amid the
 chatter of his
 more frivolous fellow-philosophers,
 preserved a rigid
 taciturnity: 'whereupon the said
 Embassadors and stran-
 gers of *Persia* began to bee merrie with him
 and to drinke
 unto him round, saying in the end: "And
 what shall we
 report of you, Sir *Zeno*, unto the king our
 Master?"
 "Marie (quoth he), no more but this, that
 there is an
 ancient man at *Athens* who can sit at the
 boord and say
 nothing.*' *

There are colder climates we could name
 where the*
 accomplishment in question is less
 remarkable. But Plu-
 tarch is lost in admiration ('Thus you see
 that silence
 argueth deepe and profound wisdom'), and
 reinforces
 so excellent a lesson with the no less
 excellent example
 of the geese of Cilicia, 'who when they be
 to take a
 flight into *Cilicia* over the mountaine *Taurus*,

which is
full of eagles, take up everie one in their bill
a good big
stone, which serveth them instead of a
locke or bridle
to restraîne their gagling; by which devise
they may passe
all night long without any noise, and not be
heard at all
or descried by the said eagles*.

There is, indeed, a good deal of curious
information
in Plutarch's whole essay 'Of Garrulity'—a
passably gar-
rulous piece of work itself; containing
various other apt